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SUBJECT: PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS SLOWLY TAKING SHAPE

¶1. (SBU) The DRC's fledgling provincial governments are beginning to take shape. Two provinces have appointed government ministers. In the other nine provinces, including the capital Kinshasa, governors have not completed initial consultations. Despite current deliberations on budgetary issues, no province has formalized a budget. Lack of experience and capacity are the source of numerous problems.

¶2. (SBU) Provincial governors were elected by their provincial assemblies in late January, and officially installed in February and March. The governors of North Kivu and Equateur provinces appointed their cabinets at the end of March. The ten provincial assemblies and that of Kinshasa, all of which were installed in late November 2006, have been in budgetary session since March 15, but none has yet approved a budget. The work of the new governments has been stymied a lack of resources, infrastructure, training, and experience.

¶3. (SBU) Comment: Representative government at the provincial level is a new experience for Congolese politicians, who have little capacity to perform their jobs effectively. Moreover, provincial governments lack the necessary physical and financial resources, and are dependent on the central government for funding. Overall, standing up effective provincial governments will be a long and arduous task needing considerable assistance and support. End comment.

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